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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, A diverse body of scholarship reports that an
3 estimated 15 million Americans have food allergies; and

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WHEREAS, According to a study released in 2013 by the
5 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, food allergies
6 among children have increased approximately 50% between 1997
7 and 2011; and

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WHEREAS, The National Restaurant Association estimates
9 that the restaurant industry receives 47% of the American
10 consumer's food dollar; and

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WHEREAS, Given the prevalence to consume food prepared in
12 restaurants either on the premises or for consumption at home,
13 the intersection of food allergies and the regulation of dining
14 establishments becomes a new area where the dangers of food
15 allergies can be addressed; and

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WHEREAS, Several states have taken affirmative efforts to
17 mitigate the potentially devastating effects of allergic
18 reactions to food by utilizing their regulatory power to ensure
19 that restaurants take proactive steps to prevent food
20 allergies; and

1 WHEREAS, In January 2009, Massachusetts Governor Deval
2 Patrick signed into law the Massachusetts Food Allergy
3 Awareness Act; and

4 WHEREAS, The purpose of this legislation is to minimize
5 risk of illness and death due to accidental ingestion of food
6 allergens by increasing restaurant industry and consumer
7 awareness of regulations and best practices with respect to
8 major food allergens; and

9 WHEREAS, The Massachusetts Food Allergy Awareness Act
10 takes several comprehensive steps to ensure that the purpose of
11 this legislation is fulfilled, such as by requiring posters to
12 be developed in collaboration with the Massachusetts
13 Restaurant Association and the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis
14 Network, requiring these posters to be exhibited in prominent
15 areas in all food establishments that cook, prepare, or serve
16 food intended for immediate consumption either on or off the
17 premises, requiring food establishments to include a notice on
18 all menus of the customer's obligation to inform the server
19 about any food allergies, and requiring a member of the food
20 establishment's staff to watch an informational video
21 concerning food allegories; and

22 WHEREAS, The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is
23 also required to develop a program for restaurants to be

1 designated as "Food Allergy Friendly" and maintain a listing of
2 these restaurants on its Internet website; and

3 WHEREAS, The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has
4 also promulgated regulations enforcing the Massachusetts Food
5 Allergy Awareness Act, as well as developed helpful resources
6 for businesses to answer their questions and assist in their
7 compliance with this legislation; and

8 WHEREAS, Other states, such as Michigan, Rhode Island, and
9 Virginia, have also passed legislation involving the
10 prevention of allergic reactions related to food served in
11 restaurants; and

12 WHEREAS, While some legislation has been introduced in
13 Illinois regarding food allergies, there are still no laws in
14 Illinois that minimize risk of illness and death due to
15 accidental ingestion of food allergens by increasing
16 restaurant industry and consumer awareness of regulations;
17 therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
19 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
20 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge the General Assembly to adopt
21 legislation containing provisions that carry out the purpose
22 and effect of the Massachusetts Food Allergy Awareness Act to

1 ensure consumer awareness regarding food allergies and also to
2 assist restaurants and other entities serving food in Illinois
3 in preventing tragedies that can come with severe allergic
4 reactions to food; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be sent
6 to the Governor and the Director of Public Health and made
7 available to the members of the General Assembly upon request.